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**TO: Economic Support Supervisors
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Training Staff
Child Care Coordinators
W-2 Agencies**

**FROM: Amy Mendel-Clemens
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BHCE/BWP OPERATIONS MEMO

No.: 03-38

Date: 06/01/2003

Non W-2 [X] W-2 [X] CC [X]

PRIORITY: HIGH

SUBJECT: CONFIDENTIALITY OF CLIENT DATA IN CARES

CROSS REFERENCE: CARES Guide, Section 1.3.2;
Income Maintenance Manual, Chapter II, Part B;
DWS Security Manual, Appendix 05

PURPOSE

This memo reaffirms Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) security requirements for all confidential data relating to case records on CARES (computer system).

According to DWD/DHFS security requirements any records displaying names and/or Social Security Numbers (SSN) or any files containing such records must be treated as confidential data subject to non-disclosure requirements.

At no time should reports, forms, screen prints or computer screens displaying an applicant name and SSN be left unattended on a staff person's desk or workstation. When away from one's desk, all materials containing confidential information must be secured in locked files and computers/terminals should be password protected (e.g. locked workstation). When paper documents are no longer needed, they must be shredded to protect against unauthorized disclosure.

BACKGROUND

DWD and DHFS have long standing policies requiring the maintenance of confidentiality for all data relating to clients of programs administered on CARES. Those requirements include the storing of all confidential records in locked files secure from access by unauthorized individuals.

An audit of controls over access, disclosure and use of Social Security Numbers in Wisconsin's Food Stamp Program was conducted in May 2002 by the USDA Office of Inspector General (OIG). During the audit of a sampling of county offices, the OIG auditors noted examples of sensitive CARES records left out on desktops or on open shelves after normal working hours.

POLICY

As stated in the Wisconsin CARES Guide, Section 1.3.2: **Access to program documentation and data storage is restricted to those with established and authorized needs. In addition, any computer printouts of information, case record information, etc., must not be left where unauthorized individuals can access it. This information must be secured in locked files.**

Security requirements for CARES data will be monitored by DWD and DHFS staff, as well as by federal auditors from the federally funded programs and from the data sources for various computer-matching agreements to CARES.

CONTACTS

BHCE CARES Information & Problem Resolution Center

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Note: Email contacts are preferred. Thank you.